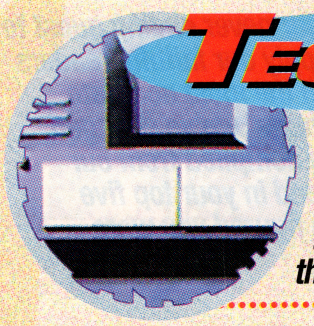
HARDWARE

TECH TALK



This month our lab monkeys swing overseas to give you an advanced peek at the Super Nintendo satellite system and on-line gaming. Get out those surfboards!

Nintendo Surfs The Net!

Have you ever flipped your Super Nintendo on its side to take a look under the machine? If you have, you've probably noticed a small external port on the bottom — if you haven't your probably taking a look now and wondering what that thing is. Well, so were we, that is until Nintendo made a recent announcement in Japan that could change the way you play video games forever.

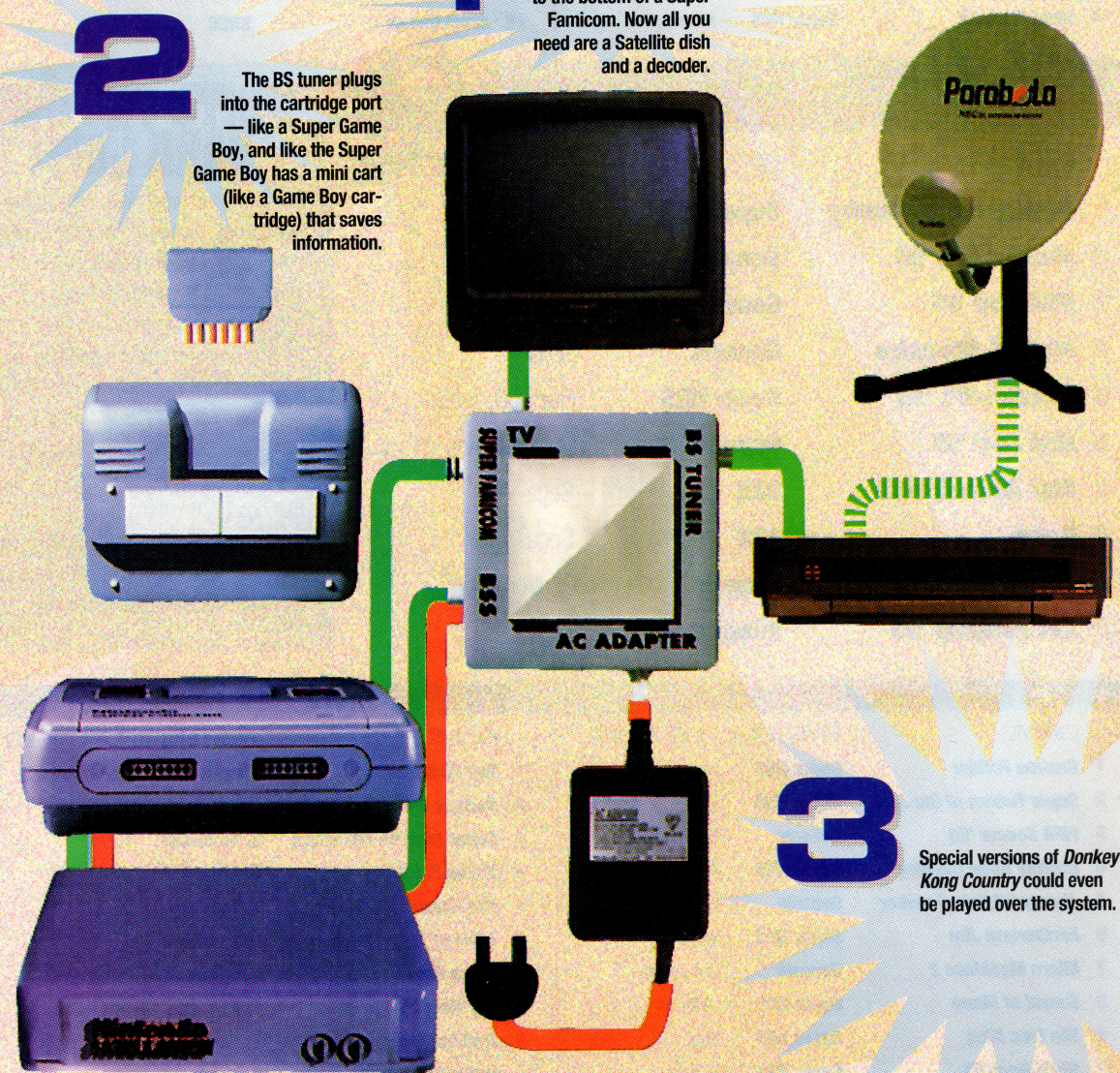
It's been named the 'Super Famicom Broadcast System' and it's the first attempt by Nintendo to digitally broadcast a signal over an orbiting satellite and onto the Super Nintendo. The very first transmission, called 'Sento Giga' will start on April 1 and in addition to music and text, games are planned for the system too.

How Does It Work?

With a special satellite broadcast adapter called the 'Satella-View' and a BS tuner, Satellite or mini-dish owners can pull signals out of the stars and onto their television sets. The BS tuner (which is about the size of a Super Game Boy) plugs into the cart slot of the Super Nintendo. Onscreen prompts guide the user through a series of menus, then allowing them to select a game or other data. The SFBS even has a 8-meg memory card that allows you to save games or other info.

1 The Satella View hooks to the bottom of a Super Famicom. Now all you need are a Satellite dish and a decoder.

2 The BS tuner plugs into the cartridge port — like a Super Game Boy, and like the Super Game Boy has a mini cart (like a Game Boy cartridge) that saves information.



3 Special versions of *Donkey Kong Country* could even be played over the system.

All of these little (and not-so-little) pieces make up the BS-X system. The BS-X could be Nintendo's answer to the Sega Channel.

Be A Video Game Infonaut

So you've got an AOL account and you've been surfing 'the net' in search of a good time. Well, search no more! ***Game Players*** offers you a who's-who of video game companies online — and some of these sites are being published for the first time. This is in no way a complete list, but it should get you started. So hop on your key-board and ride those electronic waves.....

Accolade INTERNET accolade@aol.com COMPUSERVE 76004.2132@compuserve.com

Activision INTERNET support@activision.com

Atari Jaguar Web Site http://thrall.cm.cf.ac.uk/Games/console/atari.

Disney Software INTERNET disneysoft@aol.com COMPUSERVE 71333.14@compuserve.com

Game Genie INTERNET game-genie-serv%nvcc.uucp@groucho.sonoma.edu

Interplay INTERNET 76702.1342@compuserve.com

Nintendo Game Boy INTERNET gameboy@mentor.cc.purdue.edu

Sega INTERNET Web Site http://www.segaoa.com Compuserve GO SEGA

Spectrum Holobyte INTERNET sholobyte@aol.com

Video Game Forum GO VIDGAM

What Does It Mean?

With mini-dishes (or Direct Satellite Systems - you've seen the commercials) just coming into use in the U.S., it's very possible to believe that Nintendo could turn the Super Nintendo into a Satellite receiver instead of a outdated lump of plastic - like the NES. And with a BS System, Nintendo could also directly download games, hints or previews, like its rival Sega is now doing with the Sega Channel. Currently only Nintendo of Japan will make the system available, and it will be by special order only for about $140.00 — but think about it, you'd never have to buy a game again! Finally, any title you'd want to play could be piped directly into your TV — but this isn't 21st century Buck Rogers stuff that's out of reach to the average gamer. With Nintendo's recent alliance with communications giant GTE, it's something that could happen in the next year or so, and although Nintendo of America hasn't made any announcement about the possibilities of bringing the system to the states, we'll keep our fingers crossed and keep you posted!

The entire unit, all hooked up and ready to go! Does the BS-X system spell the end for all those late night trips down to the video game store for a midnight rental? Only time will tell! If this system is successful in Japan, look for a similar setup on our side of the ocean. After all, Nintendo just hooked up with GTE...

HARDWARE